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Some particulars have already appeared in *The Times* of June 7 about the local arrangements for the forthcoming meeting. There is every prospect that a considerable body of members of the association will cross the Atlantic, though the inducements which are offered to undertake the journey are nothing like so tempting as in the case in the earlier Canadian meetings. The transatlantic steamship companies have decided that it is impossible to depart from the agreement which exists between them not to make any reduction of fares during August, though so far as possible they are prepared to allot special accommodation to members and associates traveling as first-class passengers. The Canadian railways have arranged to carry members of the British Association party at special rates, generally amounting to a single fare for the double journey. It is impossible, of course, to estimate with exactness the cost of the trip, everything depending on the individual tastes of the visitor and on the length of time he is prepared to spend in Canada.

In no case, however, can the trip be undertaken without a considerable expenditure of time and money. The local committee, without making any allowance for the reduction of railway rates, has estimated that the cost of the return journey, occupying about six weeks from Liverpool, will range from \$384 to \$500, or say in round figures from £75 to £100, according to the nature of the accommodation required. To meet the expenses of the visit the dominion government has made an appropriation of \$25,000, while the city of Winnipeg has voted \$5,000. A portion of these grants will be available to lighten the cost of the visit in the case of those taking an active part in the meeting, but the relief thus afforded will only be very small, and necessarily considerations of both time and cost will prevent many of the leaders of scientific thought in this country from undertaking the journey to Winnipeg. Those, however, who do go will, it may be hoped, form a fair representation of British men of science; and the particulars which are now available about the sectional programs afford abundant evidence that on the

scientific side the meeting will not fall below the high standard of former gatherings, either in this country or in the colonies.

The president of the association at Winnipeg will be Sir Joseph J. Thomson, F.R.S., Cavendish professor of experimental physics at Cambridge. In his opening address the president will refer to the importance of original research as a means of education, the advantages and disadvantages as a training for work in science of the systems of education now in force in our schools and universities. He will deal with the light thrown by recent investigation on the nature of electricity; on the relation between matter and ether and the part played by the ether in modern physics; and a discussion of some problems raised by the discovery of radium.

#### THE SMITHSONIAN AFRICAN EXPEDITION

THROUGH the Smithsonian African Expedition under the direction of Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, the National Zoological Park at Washington has been presented by Mr. W. W. McMillan, of Juju Farm, near Nairobi, British East Africa, with an exceptional collection of live African animals.

In a letter recently received at the institution from Lieut. Col. Edgar A. Mearns, of the expedition, it is stated that the collection includes eleven large mammals and three large birds, all in fine condition and for the most part well broken to captivity, as follows: a male and female lion, two years old; a male and two female lions, seventeen months old; a female leopard, a pet of Mrs. McMillan; two cheetahs; a wart hog, two years old; one Thompson's and one Grant's gazelle, well grown; a large eagle of unusual species; a small vulture, and a large Buteo. Specimens of none of these, except the lions and leopard, are at present contained in the park.

The collection is now at the farm near Nairobi. Mr. A. B. Baker, assistant superintendent of the National Zoological Park, has been designated to take charge of its transportation to this country, and for this purpose has sailed from New York on the White Star Line steamer *Arabic*. On his way to Nairobi,

Mr. Baker will stop at London, Hamburg and Mombasa, to perfect details of shipment.

It is intended to secure for the park from Mr. Henry Tarleton, of one of the farms near Nairobi, two Coke's hartebeests, a female water-buck and several zebras, specimens of which are not now owned by the park.

#### *PROFESSOR NEWCOMB'S LIBRARY*

THE executor of the estate of the late Professor Simon Newcomb (Mrs. Anita Newcomb McGee, 1620 P Street, Washington, D. C.) offers for sale his complete library of books and pamphlets on astronomy, mathematics and allied subjects. During the working years of his life it had been his policy to possess for himself, so far as circumstances allowed, the books necessary in his work. As years passed on it seemed to him that the collection would prove to be of permanent scientific value and he therefore enlarged it by the addition of books which he did not need at the time but which he deemed most useful to the future investigator, especially the student of scientific history. It had been his hope that his library would help in the training of some future great scientist, or in his work. This being his motive, he was especially anxious that the library should not be divided, but should belong to some institution in which astronomical and kindred branches of research are carried on.

With this end in view the value of the library is estimated at only \$7,000, which is the estimated cost of the purchased books alone, although the number of transactions of societies and other gift books together with the many thousand pamphlets form a very considerable portion of the value of the library.

There are nearly 4,000 volumes and about 4,000 pamphlets in the library; the pamphlets are all classified and arranged for easy reference and include reprints of memoirs of astronomy, mathematics and physics. In round numbers 1,000 volumes are complete sets of publications of learned societies and observatories.

There is a complete set of Crelle's journal. There are 75-100 catalogues of precision (star-

places). The library is especially rich in all branches of astronomy, including popular works, history of astronomy, ancient astronomy, mathematical astronomy, astrophysics, stellar astronomy and photographic astronomy. The large number of volumes on celestial mechanics, including the works of the most celebrated writers is worthy of special mention. The bulk of the library is of course on astronomy and mathematics, the former predominating, but there are also several hundred volumes on physics, geography and meteorology, and many of the transactions cover general science. It is believed that this is the most complete library of its kind in America except, perhaps, that at Harvard University and including the Harvard Observatory library.

In addition to the above and not as yet catalogued, are several hundred—possibly approaching 1,000—books, reports and volumes of periodicals on economic subjects. This is also for sale with or apart from the above.

A typewritten catalogue of this library has been prepared under Professor Newcomb's personal direction in which the works are classified approximately on the system now current in catalogues of astronomical literature. This will be sent to any one contemplating purchase of the collections as a whole. Until about the middle of September the library will remain in place and may be examined.

#### *SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS*

PROFESSOR SAMUEL WILLIAM JOHNSON, emeritus professor of agricultural chemistry in Yale University, where he has held a professorship for fifty-three years, a member of the National Academy of Sciences since 1866, past president of the American Chemical Society, eminent for his contributions to agricultural chemistry, died in New Haven on July 21 in his eightieth year.

PROFESSOR NEWCOMB's daughter, Mrs. Anita Newcomb McGee, 1620 P street, Washington, is engaged in the preparation of a biography of her father, and will be most appreciative of any assistance which his friends may render,